

From: Todd Watson
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/6/01 9:59pm
Subject: Opinion regarding DOJ-Microsoft settlement

Hello,

As I read the proposal to allow Microsoft to donate software, hardware and services to America's poorest schools as a means for settling this suit, I felt compelled to register my opinion of this proposal.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it seems to me, that while this appears to be a noble gesture, let us not forget that this is the same organization that has already been ruled to be a monopoly and/or engage in monopolistic practices. With due respect, since this ruling I've not seen any issuance of any order that seeks to regulate their practices, as we have seen with other monopolies and oligopolies in our society.

As you consider their proposal, I'd encourage you to NOT allow Microsoft to provide software or services, especially their own, as a part of this settlement. This has nothing to do with an anti-Microsoft position, but rather the application of common sense. We, as a people, generally craft our punitive measures in such a way that the guilty cannot continue to harm the injured party. For example, we often take the right to drive away from someone convicted of a crime that involves a motor vehicle. We take away a criminal's right to be a part of society until he has paid his debt to that society. Microsoft should not have a remedy that allows them to further weave its products into the fabric of our society.

Please understand that the issue is far greater than the offer of goods and services. The issue has to do with an indoctrination of school children with computer software technology that sources from a single point. Our children should be given the opportunity to use products from various vendors. This more accurately reflects the type of an environment in which they will work after they enter the work force.

The proposal, and presumed acceptance of such a remedy, in my opinion, is a thinly-covered ploy to enable Microsoft to extend its reach. This does not even speak to the point that a remedy of donated software would have no real dollar value, since every copy of the donated product is essentially provided to schools at no cost to Microsoft. I realize the products have retail value, but the REAL cost to Microsoft is near zero. I'll bet they will write the costs of this software off in their taxes, and this should not be allowed, either. Please make your remedy have some barbs. The American people expect and deserve no less.

I'd suggest an alternative plan. Let Microsoft provide the goods and services, but let them be products they have to buy (with REAL money), such as Sun Solaris workstations, IBM AIX servers, Silicon Graphics workstations, Linux workstations or servers, Oracle databases, Apple OS-X, and other

competitors' products.

Thank you for taking time to listen to the American people as you consider your decision.

W. Todd Watson